

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 10 and 12 are pending, with claims 11, 13 and 14 having been canceled above and claims 1, 3, 6 and 7 having been amended above.

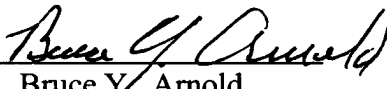
Claims 1 - 3, 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,668,661 to Tomioka in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,333,813 to Morita et al. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of claim 1 having been amended above so as to clarify the differences between the present invention and the prior art. Claim 1 as amended above now includes the limitation "a first reflective surface that deflects light paths from the objective optical system to a substantially horizontal direction, a second reflective surface that then deflects the light paths upward, and a third reflective surface that then deflects the light paths to a substantially horizontal direction, wherein the first through third reflective surfaces form a folded optical system and the pair of zoom optical systems is arranged within the folded optical system" as recited at lines 7 - 12 of claim 1, and the limitation "the first and second connectors are arranged on opposite sides of the optical axis of the objective optical system as viewed in the direction of the horizontal optical path of the folded optical system" as recited in the last three lines of claim 1. Support for these changes can be found in Fig. 7 of the drawings as filed. Moreover, the specification has been amended above at page 10, so as to provide antecedence in the specification for that which is now claimed.

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,668,661 to Tomioka in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,333,813 to Morita et al. as applied to claims 1 and 2 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,798,451 to Fujiwara. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the above-discussed requested amendment to claim 1. Claims 7 and 8 each depend indirectly from claim 1, and thus include the limitations of claim 1. As amended above, claim 1 is **not** made unpatentable by Tomioka and Morita et al. for the reasons discussed in the preceding paragraph. Since Fujiwara does not make up for the deficiencies of Tomioka and Morita et al. in making claim 1 (as amended above) unpatentable, claims 7 and 8 should be allowable over the prior art of record at least for the reasons, discussed above, that amended claim 1 distinguishes Tomioka in view of Morita et al.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,668,661 to Tomioka in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,333,813 to Morita et al. as applied to claims 1 and 2 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,412,727 to Taira. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested in view of the above-discussed requested amendment to claim 1. As amended, the combined teachings of Tomioka and Morita et al. no longer make claim 1 as amended above obvious. Thus, claim 9 distinguishes over the prior art of record at least by being a dependent claim that depends indirectly from claim 1, since Taira in no way makes up for the deficiency with regard to the amended limitations of claim 1.

It is respectfully requested that the above changes to the specification and claims be allowed entry, despite the last Office Action being a Final Rejection, on the basis that the requested changes should place the application in condition for allowance with only cursory review.

Respectfully submitted,
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